

Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture Services (Level 4) with strands in Amenity, Arboriculture, Cemetery, Landscape Design, Landscape Construction, and Sports Turf

Qualification number: 2674

Date of review: 18 March 2020

This report refers to graduates awarded this qualification prior to: 31 December 2019

Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National consistency is confirmed

Threshold:

The threshold to evaluate sufficiency with the graduate profile was determined as evidence that graduates of this qualification will be able to demonstrate the skills of supervision and providing instruction to team members using a range of effective communication and interpersonal skills relevant to a horticulture sector. In addition:

Graduates of the Amenity strand will also be able to:

- Implement and monitor a management plan for the care of parks and open spaces
- Implement and monitor a seasonal management plan to achieve functional and aesthetic effects of plants, and management of their health and vigour

Graduates of the Arboriculture strand will also be able to:

- Carry out routine tree maintenance and management activities at heights and around hazards
- Carry out tree removal

Graduates of the Landscape Design strand will also be able to:

- Create a garden design

Graduates of the Landscape Construction strand will also be able to:

- Construct a landscape design from plans

Graduates of the Sports Turf strand will also be able to:

- Implement a sports turf management programme consistent with enterprise and sports turf specifications

It should be noted that the core outcome has been modified in the threshold statement from requiring graduates to 'supervise and provide instruction' to graduates 'demonstrating the skills of supervision and providing instruction'. This reflects the recommendations of the TEOs, with the agreement of the qualification developer, and is noted in the recommendations to the developer in the final section of this report.

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

The following education organisations have been found to have sufficient evidence.

2674 New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture Services (Level 4) with strands in Amenity, Arboriculture, Cemetery, Landscape Design, Landscape Construction, and Sports Turf

Final Consistency Review Report

MOE Number	Education Organisation	Final rating
6010	Manukau Institute of Technology	Sufficient
6013	Otago Polytechnic	Sufficient
6015	Southland Institute of Technology	Sufficient
6004	Unitec Institute of Technology	Sufficient
6019	Waikato Institute of Technology	Sufficient

Introduction

This qualification is designed for those wishing to work in the horticulture industry in a self-managing capacity which may require some responsibility for the performance of others. It will enable individuals to demonstrate the skills required to supervise day to day operations in a horticulture subsector or area within a subsector. The qualification is stranded to recognise the specific skills and knowledge required to take responsibility for the daily operations in the amenity, arboriculture, cemetery, landscape design, landscape construction, or sports turf sector.

This qualification is offered by five institutes, with total graduate numbers ranging from nine to 50.

Process

Due to a unique and unavoidable set of circumstances, a review meeting did not take place. A desk review of the documentation including the PowerPoint presentations was undertaken and feedback sent to the TEOs with further questions. Each TEO responded with well-considered and insightful responses which clarified the issues raised and provided further evidence where necessary. The qualification developer was included in the threshold discussions and provided comment and was kept informed of the suggestions made by TEOs.

Evidence

The education organisations provided a range of evidence to demonstrate that their graduates met the graduate profile outcomes.

The criteria used to judge the evaluation question were:

- The nature, quality and integrity of the evidence presented by the education organisation:
- How well the organisation has analysed, interpreted and validated the evidence, and used the understanding gained to achieve actual or improved consistency
- The extent to which the education organisation can reasonably justify and validate claims and statements relating to the consistency of graduate outcomes, including in relation to other providers of programmes leading to the qualification.

Evidence was presented to demonstrate the robustness of the programme and its alignment with the graduate profile outcomes (GPOs) of the qualification. Graduate and employer feedback were sought, and although response rates of some institutes were low, the feedback gained provided valuable insights into the achievement of the GPOs. Destination data confirmed that the majority of graduates who responded had gained employment or went on to further study in related fields.

2674 New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture Services (Level 4) with strands in Amenity, Arboriculture, Cemetery, Landscape Design, Landscape Construction, and Sports Turf

Final Consistency Review Report

How well does the self-assessment and supporting evidence provided by the education organisation demonstrate that its graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold?

The robustness of the programmes and their alignment to the qualification were well evidenced. All TEOs had ensured that assessments were internally moderated, and the outcomes used to strengthen the programme. External moderation had occurred through PIPTA and through the establishment of cluster groups.

All programmes are highly practical and applied in real-work situations. This provided students with the opportunity to demonstrate competence. Examples of student work and assessment tasks exemplified the applied nature of the programmes.

Gaining employer feedback had proven difficult, and this aspect needs consideration to seek more effective ways of interacting with employers for the purpose of gaining feedback on the achievement of graduate outcomes. The feedback gained was valuable in that it indicated not only areas where students were achieving the GPOs, but areas where they were not.

Graduate views on their confidence in and ability to apply the GPOs was also gained, with GPO 1 (core GPO) being rated lowest. This rating was also reflected in Employer and Next User feedback.

Overall, the self-assessment and supporting evidence supplied by all organisations, demonstrated that their graduates meet the graduate outcomes at the determined threshold.

Special Focus

This qualification has six strands, with the number of education organisations in parenthesis – Amenity (1), Arboriculture (3), Cemetery (0), Landscape Design (3), Landscape Construction (1) and Sports Turf (1).

The strands have credit values ranging from 60 to 175 credits, as follows:

- Amenity 130 credits
- Arboriculture 90 credits
- Cemetery 130 credits
- Landscape Design 60 credits
- Landscape Construction 70 credits
- Sports Turf 185 credits

Examples of good practice

All TEOs provided comprehensive and clear Self-assessment Summary Reports with additional supporting documentation. They demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of consistency and demonstrated a significant level of self-reflection.

One TEO analysed graduate survey feedback in terms of three groups – graduates in work, graduates in further study and graduates not in work or further study. This provided a deeper and more meaningful analysis. The most significant insight was that those who were in further study did not consider GPO1 (supervision) to be of relevance.

Issues and concerns

It is becoming increasingly evident that gaining feedback from employers is challenging with several graduates not giving permission for employers to be contacted.

2674 New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture Services (Level 4) with strands in Amenity, Arboriculture, Cemetery, Landscape Design, Landscape Construction, and Sports Turf

Final Consistency Review Report

Concerns were also raised by TEOs, as well as a number of graduates and employers, about the achievability and relevance of the core graduate profile outcome which states that graduates of this qualification will be able to supervise and provide instruction to team members using a range of effective communication and interpersonal skills relevant to a horticulture sector.

The TEOs, employers and graduates noted that being capable of supervising and providing instruction to team members was not likely to be achieved in the timeframe and the learning context. For example, twenty percent of arboriculture employers for one institute strongly disagreed that GPO1 had been met. It was also noted that graduates were unlikely to have had the practice or experience needed to supervise others.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

Based on the information above it is suggested that this qualification be reviewed and modified to better reflect a NZQA level 4 qualification, and to ensure that the purpose statement and graduate profile outcomes are achievable within the timeframe and context of the qualification delivery.